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NIRMAN is awarded 2019 Grassroots Justice Prize in New York on 15th July, 2019

Bhubaneswar/ 16/07/2019. NIRMAN is awarded the Grassroots Justice Prize by NAMATI, a Global Legal Empowerment Network, in New York for its comprehensive work on legal empowerment of Tribal and forest dwelling communities through implementation of “ Forest Rights Act, 2006”. The organization is lauded for its path breaking initiative on facilitation of legal rights for Tribal and forest dwelling communities over their customarily used land and forest resources using empowering provision of this historic legislation in Rayagada district of Odisha. One of the important achievements of NIRMAN was to facilitate vesting of legal title to 69 villages over their Community Forest Resources (CFR) while status of settlement of such rights under this law is extremely poor throughout the country. Besides, NIRMAN is facilitating FRA in another 300 villages for securing community rights (titles/patta) over community forest resources. More than 600 Tribal families have also received legal rights (titles/patta) over forest land facilitated by NIRMAN.

The decision of award was made by a [panel of judges](#) composed by 12 global leaders and visionaries in the field of legal empowerment. The choice was very difficult; about 200 exceptional organizations with extensive experience in the field applied, but the comprehensive work supporting Tribal and forest-dwelling communities building capacities, strengthen community institution, generating links with government and providing legal aid has dazzled the judges, and Nirman has been selected as the winner.

Below, we share some of the judges' comments and reasoning that led them to choose NIRMAN as the winner of the 2019 Grassroots Justice Prize:

- “The organisation has developed excellent capacity building methods through participatory action and effective community mobilization strategies. When the communities can claim collective legal entitlements or equal rights, this approach is particularly crucial”.
- “congratulations for an important and strategic job”
- “It is impressive the work done towards restoring environmental justice, recognition and strengthening the power of communities in the use, management, and governance of the commons, seeking to create change at the structural level.”

“The panel of judges feel that the organization is making enormous gains in advancing justice for tenants and dwellers”. These comments acknowledged the commitment of **NIRMAN’S** work.

Mr. Prasant Mohanty, Executive Director, NIRMAN attended the Grassroots Justice Prize ceremony at Millenium Hilton, New York, USA, on July 15th, during the High Level Forum and received the award. The award for winning the prize is USD \$10,000. Ms. Mary Robinson,

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Former President of Ireland and global leader of climate justice presented the award in the presence of other dignitaries eg. Ms. Carman Carlos Caravana, Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Argentina, The UN Ambassador of The Netherlands, Priscilla Schwartz, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Sierra Leone, Ms. Hina Jilani from The Elders.

Mr. Mohanty said, “It is an honor and recognition for NIRMAN for its commitment for legal empowerment of tribal and other forest dwellers community in Odisha”. This will inspire the NIRMAN team to extend its outreach and take its work to a greater height.

Mr. Suresh Chandra Bisoyi,
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